

Bashor's Reply to Calvert.

Calvert. Now my friends, it don't make any difference to us at all, what men or fraternities around us call themselves, it don't change our name.

Comment. Certainly not. As long as you are incorporated as the German Baptist church, deed your properties, issue church certificates and do business in that name, you should be law abiding citizens and call yourselves by the name in which your business is transacted. Men have been involved into serious trouble in this country by doing business in one name, and passing themselves in business by another.

Calvert. He said then, addressing a hundred thousand brethren and sisters: I call you brethren and sisters, and ask you to accept of my work as of advantage to the brotherhood.

Comment. Holsinger never addressed "a hundred thousand brethren and sisters" when a publisher in the German Baptist church. The census where all were together, showed the combined membership as not exceeding 60,000. I refer to this to show how inaccurate you are, and how closely you need to be watched. He called them the brethren and sisters because they had not yet expelled him, previous to a trial.

Calvert. Then, my friends, I need only appeal to our hymn book, published in 1867. Long ago, from the very time of Alexander Mack until today the same name is there, and I expect we shall retain it, if we do the will of Jesus, until the trumpet sounds: it makes no difference what the world may say.

Comment. What name will you retain till the "trumpet sounds?" The German Baptist? Suppose Holsinger or some one else published a hymn book, and called it the "Brethren's Hymn Book," and the book was used by the German Baptist church, would that be of greater authority in determining the name of the church, as the Brethren, than the annual meeting in official session deciding that it should be the German Baptist, and that church property should be decided in that name?

Calvert. Now, as we look at these thoughts, and by the names that we call them by, I expect that the door is attempted to be opened and that the brethren for fifteen long years by the very men that are walking around you are telling what wonderful and terrible things we have done: they have brought against us the following charges, and I read from the "EVANGELIST" of March 12th, 1884, and it seems to have been endorsed by the brethren, as they term themselves, and I know by Mr. Bashor: "The teaching and practice of the German Baptist Church is authorized by the scriptures.—We deny it."

Comment. In EVANGELIST, March 12, 1884, I published a challenge to the clergy of the German Baptist church, in which it was proposed to discuss certain forms and ceremonies which you have exalted to the dignity of essential church doctrine. We deny their scriptural authority. The points were specified. Why did you not show the gospel authority for them, instead of ranting over our terrible impudence in presuming to question the infallibility of your church machinery?

Calvert. Who deny it? We that write and publish that paper, "and hold up to the world the practice of these brethren." Deny that it is according to God's word and therefore certainly they must repudiate it. Why, what does the EVANGELIST say? Why, their practice, he says is a relic of barbarism.

Comment. This is what I said. "Your refusal to allow the sisters to break bread and pass the cup to each other, at communion, is a relic of barbarism, following the old heathen custom that man is the Lord, the woman the slave, and all are not 'one in Christ' as declare the Scriptures."—*Sound of the Trumpet, page 10.*

Among the barbarians and heathen the women are below the men, and all official acts, and acts of honor are performed by the men. In Christ all are one, male and female, bound and free. The Christian idea of equality would then allow the sisters to break bread, the heathen idea would not. Now do you see what I meant? I said your refusal to allow sisters to break bread and pass the cup at communion service was more in harmony with barbarous customs than with the Christian doctrine of "woman equality."

Calvert. He says it is pharisaical, heretical, uneclesiastical hierarchy, it is idolatry and it is hypocrisy and wholly disobedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. I wonder if he accused his mother of that.

Comment. In this statement you lose all claim to respectful consideration. I brand it in the whole and all its parts, as a falsehood. Your cause must be a weak one, when you are forced to resort to slander and wholesale falsehood to maintain it. No such language ever fell from my lips, or the point of my pen relative to the church of my mother, and sir, when you degrade the Christian

pulpit by uttering falsehoods and invade the sanctity of the grave, you injure your standing as a gentleman or a Christian. Mere ranting vulgarity is not preaching, nor working on the sympathies and appealing to the prejudices of the ignorant is not defending the truth. Until you can show where I used language relative to the German Baptist church as stated in your "Sermon," you must stand as a slanderer and unfit for a place in the Christian pulpit.

Calvert. I bless God, although these things are broadcast to the world, that hundreds and thousands of our brotherhood have gone to eternity with the faith I lay before you this morning, and his own mother among them.

Comment. Yes, but the faith you "lay before" us in this sermon, is only the part we hold in common. The point of dispute between the two churches you only discuss by way of insinuation and bold assertion. My mother believed the doctrine and practiced the ordinances of the church, but she died before you had "made the law of God mandatory." Were she living to-day it is my impression she would accept the gospel as it was before you made it mandatory, as do father and most of the children.

Calvert. I wonder whether she is in hell! I wonder whether he believes that; for the brethren that have ever believed and practiced as is described in that paper they must all be in ruin.

Comment. I hardly think so. She and they served God to the best of their knowledge, quietly and humbly, and did not run over the country misrepresenting people, and mistating the language and position of an opponent. Perhaps, if you believed with them and the Bible that God is a "respector of character," you would place more stress upon character and conduct, and less upon a mechanical observance of church machinery.

Calvert. But the greater mystery about it is that he is ready to open the communion door to the barbarians and to the pharisees and has invited all of us; just come over and commune with us won't you?

Comment. The mystery about it is that you can so far disregard the truth as to make that statement. I have not invited you all to, "just come over and commune with us." We practice the Gospel doctrine, of "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat," and therefore do not invite all of you to the Lord's table. Whoever told you I did was mistaken. And if you stated it upon your own authority you did so without acquaintance with facts. I have sometimes said to persons in your church who favored the Gospel practice, that they could commune at the Lord's table in our congregation if they desired the privilege. But to such as you I never gave an invitation.

Calvert. Well, that is a point upon which we will look for a moment. How is that connected with and can the world now be surprised—as we get these thoughts—that we are severed and I want to ask my brethren and sisters here, have you ever said an unpleasant word or cast out an unholy epithet against those who differ with us? We hold all as standing upon equal ground and allowing them their privileges, and we are not the people that have ever branded the world with such things as are there.

Comment. What is the point? That I called you barbarians, pharisees, heathens, idolaters, and hypocrites and then invited you all to come over and commune with us? Is that it? If it is your point is broken, since the whole of it is based upon that which is false. I did no such a thing and you ought to be ashamed to charge me with it. You preach everybody to destruction in this sermon, by implication, but your own church, and to play upon the string of sympathy comes with bad grace from your lips.

Calvert. Well, this came up in the church and the brethren labored with the same character of charges and epithets and denunciations for a long time, they were forced to take some action by which we might all know where we stand, and you can now take the result and I take their word for it. And I get the idea from that same writer that he had labored and desired, and would never rest until he saw our brotherhood torn into a thousand atoms. [See EVANGELIST of Dec. 10, 1884.] I have his own word for it right here, for it is continued: he never would stop the battle of ruin, of tearing away and of destruction until the church that he terms German Baptist, their ecclesiastical power, or ministerial, or whatever he calls it, would be torn into a thousand atoms: and then after all that say: "Come! there is no difference; come commune with us."

Comment. It appears that you cannot represent an opponent correctly, even when you hold his writings in your hand. I said, "This we knew, but confident of the absolute correctness of our theories, and the impregnable character of our fortified claims we pledged to each other and to God, our determined purpose and sacred honor to not falter in our work until the sun would rise upon a day when a pious, Christian woman could hold an approved membership in the Dunkard church, and exercise liberty of conscience in the selection of the particular shape of head gear, by which she would be adorned in public; when a very small preacher in a very large office should have precedence only as he merited it by earnest effort and substantial work; when the traditions of the elders would with impunity be disrespected and the assumed authority of annual conference ignored. When, in short the "Dunkard" ecclesiastical hierarchy should be broken into a thousand atoms, and all the accumulated customs, traditions and mandates which paralyze the church's power, and destroyed the growth of her spiritual manhood, should be forever buried in the dismal past, and original primitive faith triumphantly reign in their stead."

And you close up this miserable piece of fabrication with a repetition of your former misrepresentation that I say "there is no difference, come commune with us." And you call yourself a Christian, and a minister of Him who said, "The truth shall make you free."

Calvert. Now, my friends, I came pretty near saying some hard things.

Comment. What a pity.

Calvert. I believe the first effort of the devil was to divide God's people, for Jesus said, a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. In the later times he has become wiser. He says, throw away the Bible! Get down to the communion table together and that will make you brethren.

Comment. Did you mean to say I am the devil, that I throw away the Bible, and ask people to "get down" to the communion table and commune together? If not me, did you mean the Brethren church to which I belong? If not, what did you mean? Do you think God will hold you guiltless for such conduct, and reckless disregard for truth and the feelings of your fellowmen, while in the sacred pulpit? It is no wonder you waited until you knew I could not be present before you preached this "sermon," and then left the country before I could reach home. And it is not surprising that members of your church were not pleased with you or with it.

Calvert. I want to look at that just a moment. What makes communion? Why, the apostle says union. Union of what? Why of faith, of practice, and a belief in all the ordinances and regulations of the house of God.

Comment. Union does not "make communion." It is one of the elements recommended by the Apostle to the Corinthian church in their divided state. Agreement to commune together, with the essential elements of the service, are the conditions upon which Christian brethren observe the Lord's supper.

Calvert. Is not that what makes communion? I want to know whether you can get into the same fraternities, for instance masonry, without being united with them in every sentiment.

Comment. No, union does not "make communion" however essential it may be as a preparation among Christians, for that occasion. If union "makes communion" the German Baptist congregation at Waterloo Iowa, cannot commune with a congregation of the same denomination in Southern Illinois, were they to meet. They are no more in union upon the tenets of German Baptist faith, than are you and the old order brethren. Nor can your congregation at Warsaw, Indiana, commune with the one presided over by R. H. Miller at North Manchester, Indiana, only about twenty miles away. If "union makes communion," the majority of your churches can no more commune together than they can commune with us. I do not know whether a man can obtain membership among the masons without being "united with them in every sentiment," or not. You having been a mason as you claim, you ought to know.

Calvert. Why, it is as common as the daybreak for the world to say, you cannot have union or communion unless you are strictly united.

Comment. It may be even more common than daybreak for the world to say that, but you belong to a people who profess to be nonconformed to the world, and led alone by what the annual meeting and the Bible says. Of course there must be union, but if it must be union in every sentiment, then the majority of German Baptist congregations are debarred from intercommunion. They are not united upon the mode of feetwashing, the style of dress and a dozen other things.

Calvert. I once belonged to another fraternity and that is the principle I learned when I was a little boy and I am not and never have abused them and I never intend to, because that is the sentiment of the Bible, is it not? Walking by the same rule, mind the same thing and speak the same things, as we find it in the word of God.

Comment. It is certainly admitted that you never abuse people. We just had a few specimens of your "nice talk" about those from whom you differ. You are noted for "nice talk" about your former church—the Methodist. You have repeated your "union idea" several times and it has been previously noticed.

Calvert. As we look at these thoughts the apostle says what! When you come together there be divisions among you, and I believe it, for there must also be heretics among you and abominable ones too. That is the way the apostle talks. He talks plainer than I do. He says this by way of reproof, for you could not have the ordinances of the house of God in an improper standing.

Comment. You cannot misrepresent the "Modern Progressives" sufficiently to satisfy your passion for misquotation, and you must try your hand on the Apostle Paul. In 1 Cor. 11: 19 he speaks of heresies and divisions as existing in the church of Corinth, but he does not say, as you represent him, that "there must also be heresies among you and abominable ones too." When you misrepresent the language of the Holy Bible it is not to be expected that your representations of "Modern Progression" or even your own church, are sufficiently accurate to be relied upon. Your reckless use of words are damaging to the cause you are set to defend.

Calvert. These are the principles as we get them of communion. And we get the idea now, as the thought comes up: Can you hold communion together with all churches? They even all eat bread and drink wine together, but will that be communion.

Comment. But suppose two denominations teach and practice essentially the same doctrines, baptize and hold communion alike, what would hinder them from holding intercommunion if they desired! Where is the gospel to forbid it? The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which grew into a great tree with many branches, and why not these different Christian churches, like the seven churches of Asia, be branches of this mustard tree or kingdom? They differ only in minor things; are alike in doctrine. If they are Christian churches, and dare not commune together, which one is not? and why not?

Calvert. Why, by that means they open the door to communion to a confirmed infidel and commune with him, and that would be the only result. No telling where and that is the tendency to which it carries us, when the principles and regulations of the Church of Christ are forgotten or trampled on; open to the entire world, no difference what they believe, where they stand, they are entitled to the Lord's table.

Comment. Ah, precisely! It took you a long time to get up to this point, but you finally reached it. Who "opens the door to communion with a confirmed infidel, open to the entire world?" We do not. Our communion is only open to believers in Christ! Did you actually believe that of us, or did you know better and use it to deceive the people? It is hard to believe you ignorant of the facts in the case. You did this with a deliberate purpose to mislead and deceive, and no amount of apology from your friends can palliate or excuse your conduct. And yet you are out as a missionary to convert men to the meek and lowly Christ.

Calvert. Well, we get the idea that the Lord's table is to be cared for by his people, and that the elders of that table or Church are to see that all is union, all is harmony, all is love, and the apostle says: "Examine yourselves and see whether you be in the faith or not, before you will come together to hold communion."

Comment. Where do you "get the idea" that elders of the church are "elders of the Lord's table"? Certainly not from the Bible.